

SHANKS AND SKULLS

Beauty, Chaos, and Carnage: Dallas Matches Deliver a Wild First Round

The opening round of the 2026 Dallas Matches had everything—upsets, collapses, heroics, and enough drama to fill a full season. What was expected to be a routine start turned into a day of absolute beauties.

Lenny Falls, Legs Wobble, Italy Blamed

Two-time defending champion **Lenny DeMartino** arrived battling the aftereffects of Mrs. DeMartino's return from a two-week Italian vacation—complete with cocktails at Patrizio's and “extracurriculars” that left the champ with jelly legs.

Johnny Pirrone took full advantage, dismantling the defending king **6 & 5**. A stunning upset, but perhaps not surprising given Lenny's condition.

Lally Feasts, Eller Falls

In the battle of the beer drinkers, **Tom Lally** was fueled by bags of “candy” and handled former champ **Dave Eller** with a convincing **4 & 3** victory.

Their post-round beverage of choice? **Modelo**. Not a single Bud Light in sight.

Bones Impeaches the President—Barely

What should have been a comfortable win turned into a political thriller. **Jim “Bones” Fareri Jr.** needed all **eight shots**, plus an extra hole, to finally **impeach President Eric Delin on the 19th**.

The match was so tense that Delin reportedly **broke up with Bones** on the 9th tee and canceled all side bets for the upcoming Ocean City trip. Democracy is fragile.

Aloisio Survives The Chin's Handicap Avalanche

The most entertaining match of the day featured **Pedro Aloisio** giving **11 shots** to **Vin “The Chin” DiCrescento**. The Chin kept it tight all afternoon, trading blows with Pedro in a back-and-forth duel.

Aloisio needed to **birdie four of the last five holes**, including the final three, to “claw” back and win with a clutch **9-footer on 18**.

Meanwhile, the next group was so far behind that the club brought in **tracking dogs** to locate them. The dogs eventually found...

Piazza Silences His Demons

Richie Piazza defeated the cycling machine **Dom Sciandra 3 & 2**, keeping his mental skeletons locked away long enough to secure the win.

Socci vs. Berardi: A Duel Worth Watching

Playing alongside Piazza and Sciandra, **Steve Socci** and **Joe Berardi Jr.** delivered a thriller. Socci trailed early, fought back to take the lead, then bogeyed 18 to force extras.

In the playoff, Berardi stood tall and knocked off the multi-time Esquire Club Champion.

Acorns Drops the Hammer on 18

Fresh off Florida golf school, **Sal Arena** used his new Skip Kendall-approved knowledge to frustrate **Jack Kinlock**. Despite three X's, Arena delivered a gorgeous **par-net-birdie on 18** to win **1 up**.

Grunlund Handles Scaglione

In the battle of the veterans, **Mark Grunlund** used a couple of well-timed strokes in 2nd third of the Ba-Hah to take control and close out **Johnny Scaglione 3 & 2**.

Handicap: Chaotic, Confusing, and Somehow Fair

If the first round proved anything, it's that handicaps are a beautiful disaster—frustrating, hilarious, and ultimately balanced.

Regular Game: High Scores Everywhere

The course played tough, and the competitive tension didn't help.

- **Pedro Aloisio** posted the day's **only sub-80 round**, a smooth **74**.
- **Tom Lally** recorded the best net score with a **72**.

In **3-Man Net Ball**, the team of **Aloisio, Lally, Mike Alesi, Eller, and Scag** swept the board with totals of **+2** (“disgraceful”), **-19** (“incredible”), **-17**

Course Notes

- Greens were slow ahead of Tuesday's aeration.
- Tee boxes and cart paths need attention—maybe a **2027 project**.
- Officers attempted to recruit frequent guest **Mike Alesi**, but he didn't bite.

The “What Just Happened?” Moment

On hole 12, **Johnny Pep** made a **9** against Lenny—and **won the hole**.

Drone footage reportedly captured Pep hitting the ladder three times while Lenny played seesaw with the pond before finally picking up and taking an X.